

DISABILITY COMPENSATION

Disability compensation is a monthly monetary benefit paid to veterans who suffer from an injury or disease that was incurred or aggravated during active military service. The paragraphs below show the four ways to accomplish service-connection for a disabling condition:

- **Direct:** The claimed disability was directly caused by military service (e.g., shoulder injury while conducting martial arts training, combat wound); or it may have resulted from an in service incident (e.g., cancer due to asbestos exposure), or from a condition that simply began on active duty (e.g., diabetes, hypertension).
- **Aggravation:** A disability that existed prior to the veteran's entrance into active duty and becomes permanently worse during service (not as a result of the condition's natural progress).
- **Presumption:** Specified chronic and tropical diseases are automatically presumed to have begun during service if they become evident to a compensable degree within certain time limits. Additionally, some diseases are presumed to have resulted from certain incidents of service (herbicide exposure) if they present themselves at any time after service. Other presumptive periods are set out for undiagnosed illnesses associated with service in the Persian Gulf area, and for other diseases associated with herbicide exposure.
- **Secondary:** Service-connection under this category may be established for a new condition which is directly and proximately caused by an established service-connected condition (e.g., veteran is service- connected for hepatitis-C and subsequently develops cirrhosis of the liver).

How Can You Apply?

You can apply by coming to our office and filing a *Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension*. ***The following material will be needed to process your claim:***

- Discharge or separation papers (DD214 or equivalent)
- Dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates)
- Medical evidence - **A Current Diagnosis** (doctor & hospital reports)